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Fulbright Rebuffed on Air Raids

White House Sees No Value in New Halt in Vietnam

By William Chapman
Washington Post Staff Writer

AUSTIN, Oct. 25 — The White House turned down today Sen. J. William Fulbright's suggestion that the bombing of North Vietnam be halted again for a time.

The Administration does not believe that another cessation of bomber strikes would be productive, White House Press Secretary Bill D. Moyers said.

Moyers was asked for President Johnson's reaction to Fulbright's suggestion Sunday that bombings be suspended for a "reasonable length of time" as a move toward peace negotiations.

"Our position has been known on that for some time," Moyers replied.

Halted Five Days

"We actually did call a halt once for a period, I believe, of five days. We indicated we were willing to do it again if there were any indications that to do so would be productive."

But, Moyers added, "we have had no indications that another cessation of the military strikes at military targets in the north would change anyone's mind anywhere else."

Fulbright, the Arkansas Democrat who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on a television panel show that the lull in bombing last May was too short. He reportedly believes that another cessation should last a few weeks.

No Consultation

Mr. Johnson is said to believe that the U.S. position in Vietnam has improved since the bombings began early this year. He has been publicly critical of those in the peace

movement who in recent weeks have demonstrated against the bombings. He has said, through Moyers, that such protests encourage the Communist leaders of North Vietnam to prolong the fighting.

Moyers said today that he did not know of any prior consultation between Fulbright and the White House before the Senator made his remarks. Mr. Johnson has said before that he hoped critics would discuss their views on Vietnam with him before stating them publicly.

Moyers also said he disagreed with Fulbright's charge that the Defense Department plays too large a role in shaping foreign policy.

"I know that Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara is much less of a militarist than some of his critics think," Moyers said.

"Secretary of State (Dean) Rusk is not a militarist. McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, is not a militarist. I'm not a militarist. And we are the ones who have been meeting most frequently" on Vietnam affairs, Moyers said.

"The President feels it is the President who sets policy in this country," Moyers added.

"President Johnson is not a militarist."

Moyers said that the White House would not criticize those who exercise the right of free speech in airing their dissents from Administration policy.

Has a Complaint

Fulbright recently complained that he was attacked for opposing the Administration's intervention in the Dominican Republic. Fulbright said he was being criticized not for the views he held but for expressing them in public.

"The White House is not criticizing anyone for exercising free speech," Moyers said.

Mr. Johnson rested on his patio and read both official and unofficial papers today at the LBJ Ranch where he is recuperating from his gall bladder operation.

He watched the abortive Agena rocket launching on his bedroom television set, Moyers said, and was disappointed at the complications that set in. "He hopes they can be ironed out before the next effort, and he hopes it will be

successful," Moyers added.

This afternoon, Mr. Johnson took a walk of about three miles and drove a car briefly for the first time since his operation, on a trip to Johnson City. He also turned tour guide at his boyhood home in Johnson City for some 60 members of the Texas Explorers Club, led by Democratic Reps. J. J. (Jake) Pickle and W. R. Poage.

The President talked by telephone this morning with secretary Rusk about developments in the Dominican Republic and about Rusk's trip to the Latin American foreign ministers' conference in Rio de Janeiro on Nov. 17.

He also talked by telephone with Presidential Assistant Jack J. Valenti about several ambassadorial matters.

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